

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claims 1-6, 8-16, and 18-20 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Coudray, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,431,778B1).

Coudray discloses the following in lines 36-52 of column 4:

"In order to allow the suspension movements of the rollers 20 and 22, the journal of each of these rollers is mounted at one respective end of an arm 25 the center of which is mounted so as to oscillate on the journal of the roller 21, the path followed by the journal of the rollers 20 and 22 upon a suspension movement thus being a circular arc centered on the journal of the roller 21, the movements of the rollers 20 and 22 being in opposition, that is to say that when the roller 22 is lowered, the roller 20 is raised and vice versa.

A spring 26 is provided to force the arm 25 in the direction in which the roller 22 is raised, that is to say in the direction where it comes up against the stretch of the upper belt 9 located in the corridor 5.

It will be observed that the roller 16 serves as a counter roller for the roller 22, that is to say that it allows it to take up the forces exerted by the spring 26."

Coudray does not disclose or anticipate the invention claimed by Applicants in claim 1 as amended and those claims dependent thereon. Coudray does not disclose or anticipate a lower looping belt having a mailpiece intake section that extends beyond the width of the upper belt adjacent the printing area running from the upstream end towards the downstream end, wherein the mailpiece intake section and the straight section form an ingest nip so that the tension of the lower belt is controlled by the elasticity of the lower belt wrapped around fixed pulleys to provide a normal force between mailpieces having different thicknesses and the upper belt for providing a friction force to move the mailpiece into the printing area for printing.

In view of the above, claims 1-20 are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions, will he please contact the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Version with Markings to Show Changes Made*In the claims:*

1. (Twice Amended) A double belt transport system having an upstream end and a downstream end for moving a mailpiece from the upstream end into a printing area of a printer, wherein the mailpiece has a lower surface and an opposing upper surface to be printed by a print head located in the printing area, said transport system comprising:

an upper looping belt having a straight section with a predetermined width covering the printing area, wherein the straight section defines a registration plane regarding the print head; and

a lower looping belt having a mailpiece intake section that extends beyond the width of the upper belt adjacent the printing area running from the upstream end towards the downstream end, wherein the mailpiece intake section and the straight section form an ingest nip so that the tension of the lower belt provides is controlled by the elasticity of the lower belt wrapped around fixed pulleys to provide a normal force between the mailpieces having different thicknesses and the upper belt for providing a friction force to move the mailpiece into the printing area for printing.